

**PRELIMINARY REMARKS**

Claim 11 has been canceled, without prejudice.

New Claim 30 has been added.

Claims 20 and 26 have been amended.

Kosaka recites assigning a “length” to the constant period of a vowel based on a “syllable beat point pitch” and the “type” of vowel. (*Col. 12, Lines 47-54*). Kosaka also recites setting an “expansion/reduction rate.” (*Col. 12, Lines 55-58*). The expansion/reduction rate is larger for vowels and certain letters (“S” and “F”) and shorter for explosive consonants (“P” and “T”). (*Col. 12, Lines 60-64*). Kosaka recites assignment of values to different variables based on information such as a syllable beat point pitch or based on whether a letter represents an explosive consonant. Kosaka does not appear to disclose assigning a value to a variable based on a “total number of syllables” in a word. Therefore, Kosaka does not anticipate Applicant’s independent Claims 1, 18, and 24 (and dependent claims).

Regarding independent Claims 6, 20, and 26 (and dependent claims), Oikawa appears to assign importance degree values to text segments. Oikawa does not appear to disclose, teach or suggest assigning an importance degree value to each “word” in a text segment, and/or the importance degree values do not specify the rate at which a text segment or word is played.

Church does not appear to disclose, teach, or suggest assigning a “playing rate indicator” to each word of a text segment.

Regarding independent Claims 13, 22, and 28 (and dependent claims), Oikawa does not disclose the use of an “inventory of pre-selected words” and does not disclose, teach, or suggest comparing each word of a text segment to “an inventory of pre-selected words” and assigning a playing rate indicator to each word “based on said comparison” as recited in Claims 13, 22, and 28. Further, Richard does not appear to recite controlling the speed at which the text is read based on whether or not words appear in a dictionary, and therefore Richard fails to disclose, teach, or suggest comparing each word of a text segment to “an inventory of pre-selected words” and assigning a “playing rate indicator” to each word “based on said comparison.”

As a result of the foregoing, the Applicant asserts that the original, amended, and new Claims in the application are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests an early allowance of such claims.

If any issues arise, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of this Application, the Applicant respectfully invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below or at *rmccutcheon@davismunck.com*.

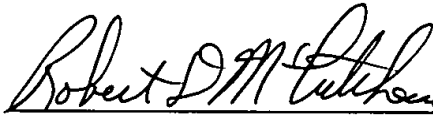
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees connected with this communication or credit any overpayment to Davis Munck Deposit Account No. 50-0208.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVIS MUNCK, P.C.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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